

# **Serious Violence**

## **Strategic Needs Assessment 2023/24**

### **Executive Summary**

**#PreventionThroughConnection**

**@VR\_Network**

**[www.violencereductionnetwork.co.uk](http://www.violencereductionnetwork.co.uk)**

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# Introduction



The Violence Reduction Network (VRN) produces a Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) on an annual basis to provide a comprehensive assessment of serious violence across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR). This document is a publicly accessible summary aimed at providing an overview of the main findings and recommendations.

The aim of the SNA is to increase understanding of the types, distribution and extent of serious violence in the local area and to help local partners to identify the people and groups who are most vulnerable to being or becoming victims or perpetrators of violence. The full SNA should be used to inform strategic planning including resource allocation.

The definition of serious violence used within the SNA is the one adopted by the VRN partnership which is: *“Violence resulting in significant physical injury and other serious harm, including sexual violence. Violence may be committed with or without weapons, and may take place in domestic or public places”*

The SNA aligns with the World Health Organization’s four-step process for implementing a public health approach to violence which includes:

1. Defining the local problem of serious violence through systematic data collection
2. Identifying the risk and protective factors through evidence and research
3. Developing and evaluating interventions
4. Scaling up effective policy and programmes

## SERIOUS VIOLENCE DEFINITION

ALL SERIOUS VIOLENCE OFFENCE TYPES

<p><b>HOMICIDE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Murder</li> <li>▪ Manslaughter</li> <li>▪ Corporate Manslaughter</li> <li>▪ Infanticide</li> </ul> <p><b>ROBBERY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Robbery of Business Property</li> <li>▪ Robbery of Personal Property</li> </ul> <p><b>ARSON:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arson – Endangering Life</li> </ul>	<p><b>VIOLENCE WITH INJURY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attempted Murder</li> <li>▪ Cause or Allow Death or Serious Physical Harm to Child or Vulnerable Person</li> <li>▪ Assault with Intent to Cause Serious Harm</li> <li>▪ Endangering Life</li> <li>▪ Assault with Injury</li> <li>▪ Racially or Religiously Aggravated Assault with Injury</li> </ul> <p><b>VIOLENCE WITHOUT INJURY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Threats to Kill</li> <li>▪ Kidnapping and False Imprisonment</li> <li>▪ Modern Slavery</li> </ul>	<p><b>STALKING AND HARRASSMENT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Harassment</li> <li>▪ Racially or Religiously Aggravated Harassment</li> <li>▪ Malicious Communications</li> <li>▪ Stalking</li> <li>▪ Controlling or Coercive Behaviour</li> </ul> <p><b>SEXUAL OFFENCES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rape</li> <li>▪ Other Sexual Offences</li> </ul> <p><b>MISCELLANEOUS CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exploitation of Prostitution</li> </ul>	<p><b>PUBLIC DISORDER:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Affray/Offences Against State</li> <li>▪ Violent Disorder</li> </ul> <p><b>BURGLARY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Burglary – Residential (Home) (Aggravated Only)</li> <li>▪ Burglary – Residential (Unconnected Building) (Aggravated Only)</li> <li>▪ Burglary – Business and Community (Aggravated Only)</li> </ul>
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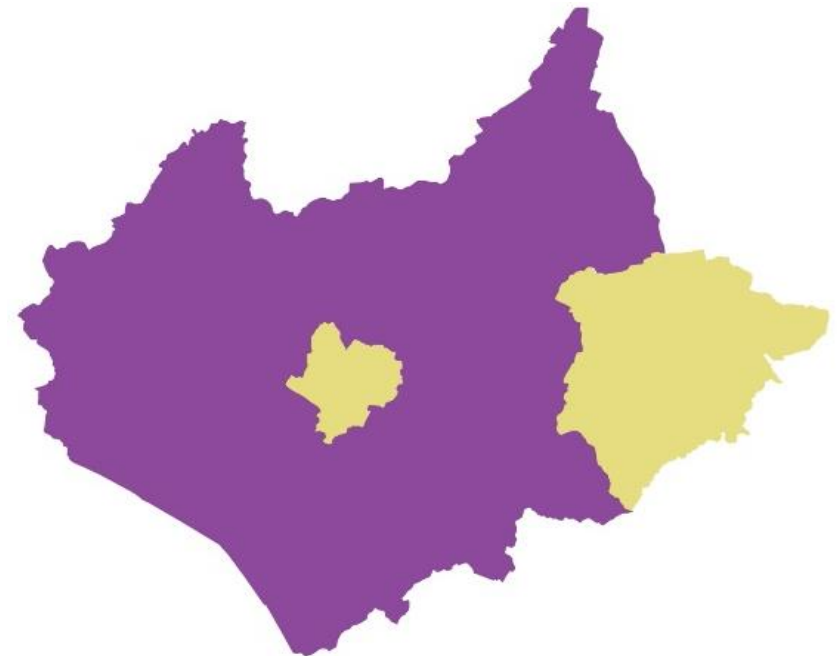
The following data sources are used in this document:

- **Police data** – Leicestershire Police recorded crime
- **Healthcare data** – Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit (A&E attendances and hospital admissions) and the East Midlands Ambulance Service
- **Social care data** – Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council
- **Education data** – Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council
- **Youth Justice Data** – Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council
- **Probation Data** – Probation Service for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
- **National data** – Data from the Department for Education, Public Health Profiles and the Office for National Statistics
- **Community and young person insights** – An LLR Community Safety Survey administered in 2022 and an LLR Young People’s Safety Survey conducted in 2021, along with targeted surveys in ‘hotspot’ areas

## Population Profile of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

- Leicestershire and Rutland are counties within the East Midlands with approximately 1.12 million residents
- The main urban area in Leicestershire is the city of Leicester
- There are significant cultural, economic and political disparities between the more rural areas of Leicestershire and Rutland and the urban and densely populated city of Leicester
- Almost 60% of Leicester’s population are from a minority ethnic background compared to less than 13% of Leicestershire’s and 5% of Rutland’s population

- Leicester has a comparatively younger population than the national average largely as a result of have two universities situated in the City. This is similar to Charnwood in Leicestershire which is also home to a university
- Leicester is the 9th largest city in England and the most populous urban centre in the East Midlands
- Out of 152 local authorities, Leicester ranks 14<sup>th</sup>, Leicestershire 136<sup>th</sup> and Rutland 148<sup>th</sup> on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation



Map of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

# Profile of Serious Violence



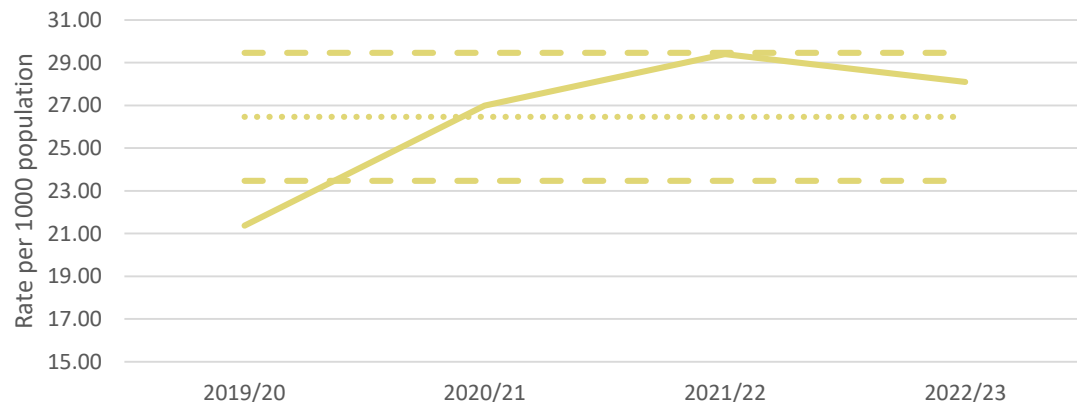
The vast majority of residents in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) have not directly experienced serious violence over the past four years. However, serious violence is not distributed evenly across the population and significant inequalities exist. Certain groups and geographical areas within LLR are at much higher risk of exposure to and involvement in serious violence.

Understanding the local profile of serious violence is key to ensuring that responses are targeted and tailored in a way which tackles disparities and secures sustainable reductions.

**1.7% of LLR residents were a victim and 1.2% were a perpetrator of serious violence in the last 12 months**

## Extent of Serious Violence

31,527 offences were recorded in 2022/23 which is a decrease of 4.4% compared to the previous financial year. The figure shows an increase from 2019/20 – 2021/22, followed by a slight decrease in 2022/23. It should be noted that the data from March 2020 onwards was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and implemented lockdown restrictions.



Rate (per 1000 population) of all reported serious violence offences across LLR (2019/20 - 2022/23) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

National data highlights that Leicestershire is ranked 6<sup>th</sup> out of all force areas for having the greatest rates of 'Violence with Injury' offences.

In 2022/23, there were 1,001 assault-related attendances to A&E recorded for residents from LLR (an increase of 19.9%) and 164 assault-related hospital admissions (an increase of 5.8%). Rates for patients under 25 and over 25 are very similar.

Both A&E attendances and hospital admissions are still significantly lower than pre-Covid levels (-27.5% and -30.2%).

## Nature of Serious Violence

'Stalking and Harassment' shows the highest rate and is closely followed by 'Violence with Injury', making up 39.7% and 37.9% respectively.

Looking at specific offence types, 'Assault - S47 - AOABH assault occasioning actual bodily harm' (ABH) (31.8%), 'Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety' (13.0%) and 'S2 - harassment without violence' (12.4%) make up the greatest volume.

Comparing the offence breakdown for 2022/23 against 2021/22, 'Stalking and Harassment', 'Public Disorder' and 'Rape' saw the greatest increases (10.4%, 8.2% and 11.0%).

Decreases were seen with 'Violence without Injury', 'Burglary - Residential' and 'Burglary - Business/Community' (-18.0%, -23.5% and -57.1%).

**Under 25s are 1.5 times more likely to commit high-harm serious violence compared to over 25s**

**30% of all serious violence was domestic-abuse related, and 9% constituted sexual violence**

# Profile of Violence



The rates of high-harm offences – such as homicide, grievous bodily harm and robbery for under 25s are 1.5 times greater than the rates for over 25s.

**Less than 1 in 10 offences involved a knife or sharp object**

The majority of violent offences did not involve a weapon. Police data indicates that just 5% of serious violence involved a knife or sharp object with 69% of offences occurring in Leicester City (April 22-March 23).

The Table below shows the rate (per 1000 population) of the five most frequent diagnosis descriptions for assault-related admissions for LLR residents.

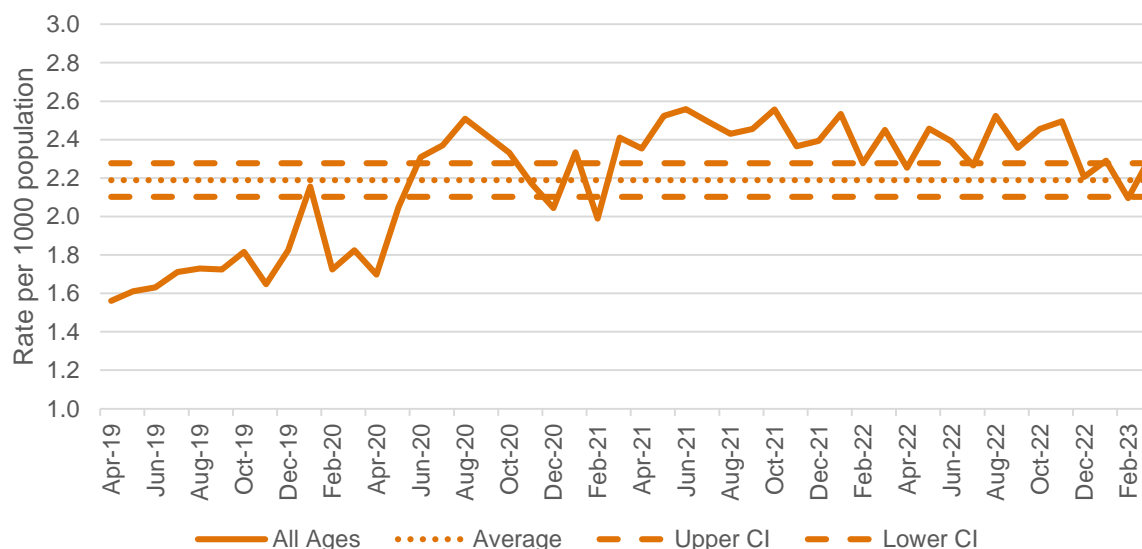
Diagnosis Group	Rate per 1000 population
Assault by bodily force	0.080
Assault by sharp object	0.025
Assault by unspecified means	0.020
Assault by other specified means	0.006
Sexual assault by bodily force	0.004

The data also shows that from April 2022 to March 2023 the length of the stay in hospital ranged from 0 – 30 days, with the majority of patients staying for three or less days. The average cost per inpatient is approximately £2375.

Data from the ambulance service also provides insights into the nature of violence. 75.0% of call-outs were categorised as ‘Assault/Sexual Assault’ and 25.0% were ‘Stab/Gunshot/Penetrating Trauma’. When looking at assault-related ambulance call-outs, 52.3% resulted in conveyance to hospital. The proportion increases to 70.3% when focusing on assaults categorised as ‘Stab/Gunshot/Penetrating Trauma’.

## Timings

The chart below shows the trend in serious violence over the four-year period of April 2019 to March 2023 for offences involving all ages.



Rate (per 1000 population) of serious violence across LLR (April 2019 – March 2023) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

While there has been fluctuation, the last 18-24 months have shown a downward trend with February 2023 reporting the lowest volumes since February 2021 (which will have been impacted by lockdown restrictions). The chart highlights a higher average rate of offences over the summer months compared to the winter months.

Trends in monthly A&E attendances, admissions and ambulance call outs were similar with fluctuations across this period.

# Profile of Serious Violence

Both police and health data show similar trends with increased levels of serious violence at the weekend although it is more evenly spread across the week for under 25s.

In terms of peak times:

- Police data shows serious violence is most frequently committed in the afternoon through to the late evening.
- The most prevalent time of the day for under 25s is 15:00-15:59. This is consistent with previous SNA findings and coincides with the end of the school day.
- A fifth of all serious violence was committed in the night-time economy (22:00-04:59)
- A&E attendances have a higher rate between the hours of 11:00-11:59, 18:00-18:59, and 21:00-21:59.
- Ambulance data reveals a peak between 22:00-23:59 with a general increase in rates between 19:00-00:59.

### Preventing Serious Violence After-School

This section has been developed based upon a deep-dive of crime data on serious violence which took place between 3-4pm and focuses on offences where the victim or suspected perpetrator is aged under 18 (April 2022 – March 2023).

**The most common offences experienced by under 18s between 3-4pm are:**

- Assault with Injury (mostly ABH) (48%)
- Harassment (15%)
- Malicious Communications (9%)

**In 2022/23, peak months of January 2023, November 2022 and May 2022 were identified, with a notable decrease seen over the summer months (June 2022 – August 2022).**

**The data shows a greater distribution of offences during the week (Monday – Friday) compared to the weekend (Saturday – Sunday) with the daily proportions seen on a weekday being roughly double the proportions seen at the weekend.**

**West Leicester, Hinckley & Blaby, and Charnwood make up the greatest proportion of offences at this time of day.**

**Peak ages of victims: 12 – 15 years**

**Peak ages of suspects/perpetrators: 12 - 15 years**

**Equal split of male and female victims**

**63% of perpetrators are male**

**The majority of perpetrators came from West and East Leicester (21%, 15%)**

**Victims were most likely to live in West Leicester (19%), Hinckley & Blaby (15%) and East Leicester (14%).**

### Serious Violence in the Night Time Economy

This section has been developed based upon a deep-dive of police data on public place serious violence in the night-time economy (NTE) using police data. This included offence committed between 22:00 and 04:59 between April 2022 to March 2023.

**The most common offences in the NTE are:**

- Assault with Injury (67%)
- Affray/Offences against State (17%)
- Robbery of Personal Property (8%)

**Over 30% of offences take place on a Saturday followed by Sunday (28%) and Friday (15%)**

**22:00 – 00:59 is the peak time**

**73% of perpetrators were identified as White, 14% were Asian and 12% were Black**

**Over eight in ten perpetrators in the NTE are male**

**The majority of perpetrators came from West Leicester (17%), followed by Charnwood (15%) and East Leicester (14%). More specifically, perpetrators most commonly resided in Braunstone & Rowley Fields, New Parks, Riverside, Whitwick & Ibstock, Abbey, Loughborough Town and Westcotes.**

**Peak ages of victims are between 18 – 22**

**Almost 70% of victims are male**

**77% of victims in the NTE were identified as White, followed by Asian 15% and Black 7%**

**Victims were most likely to live in West Leicester, East Leicester, Hinckley & Blaby and Chamwood with all areas reporting around 15% of the cohort. More specifically, victims commonly reside in Braunstone & Rowley Fields, New Parks, Beaumont Leys, Loughborough Town, Riverside, Westcotes and Abbey.**

# Profile of Serious Violence



## Geography of Serious Violence

Leicester saw the highest rate and volume of serious violence which double the rate seen in Leicestershire. Charnwood saw the highest volume and North West Leicestershire saw the highest rate despite making up only 8.5% of the LLR total.

Area	Rate per 1000 population	% of LLR total
LLR	28.13	100.0%
Leicester	42.74	49.9%
Leicestershire	21.36	48.2%
Charnwood	24.37	14.2%
Hinckley and Bosworth	24.10	8.7%
North West Leicestershire	25.64	8.5%
Harborough	16.43	5.1%
Blaby	17.52	5.7%
Melton	22.44	3.7%
Oadby and Wigston	22.09	4.0%
Rutland	14.54	1.9%

Rate (per 1000 population) and proportion of serious violence offences across LLR and district/borough areas (April 2022 – March 2023) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

Looking at the Leicestershire Police Neighbourhood Policing Areas, 14.7% of all serious violence across LLR occurred in West Leicester, closely followed by East Leicester (14.6%), Hinckley & Blaby (14.4%) and Charnwood (14.2%). More specifically, the highest density of offences were seen in City Centre, Braunstone & Rowley Fields, New Parks, Beaumont Leys, Cultural Quarter and Whitwick & Ibstock.

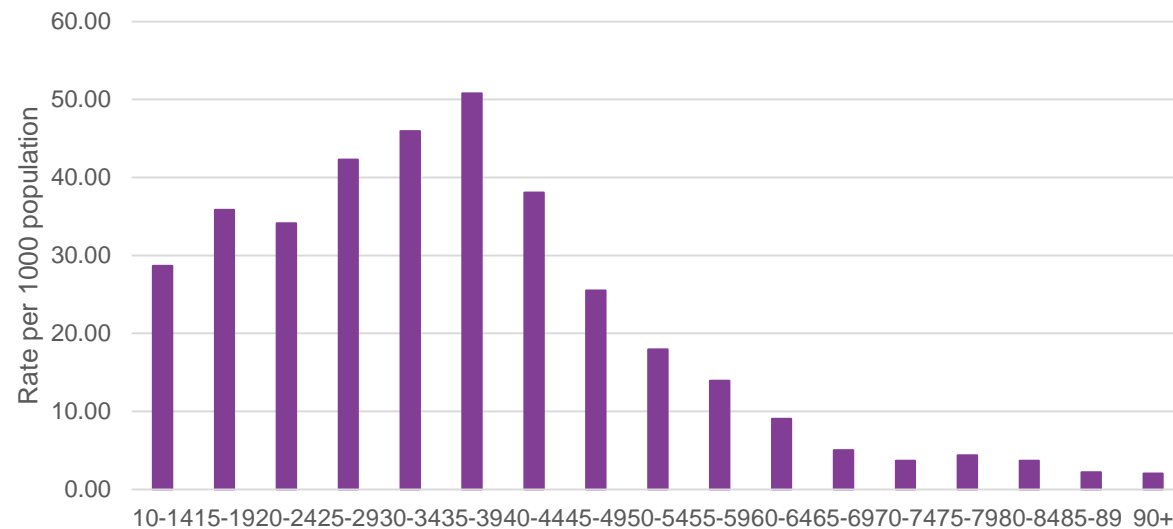
62.6% of serious violence occurred in a dwelling, followed by public/open place (e.g. street, park etc), hospitality (4.6%) and education settings (2.7%).

## Perpetrators

The vast majority of people in LLR are not involved in serious violence, with just 1.2% of the LLR population being perpetrators of serious violence.

Those aged under 40 are most likely to be perpetrators of serious violence, with the rates increasing between each group to a peak seen for those aged 35-39 years old, indicating that this group is most likely to be involved in serious violence.

Under 25s contributed to 30% of serious violence in 2022/23



Rate (per 1000 population) of offences by suspected perpetrator age (at date of offence) of serious violence based on those residing in LLR (April 2022 – March 2023) (Source: Leicestershire Police)



# Profile of Serious Violence



The majority of offenders are male (70.9%). Male perpetration is most likely to involve a male victim. Males are considerably more likely to be involved in higher harm offences.

Nearly three quarters of perpetrators were identified as White (74.6%), followed by smaller proportions categorised as Asian (15.1%), Black (8.9%), and Other (1.5%).

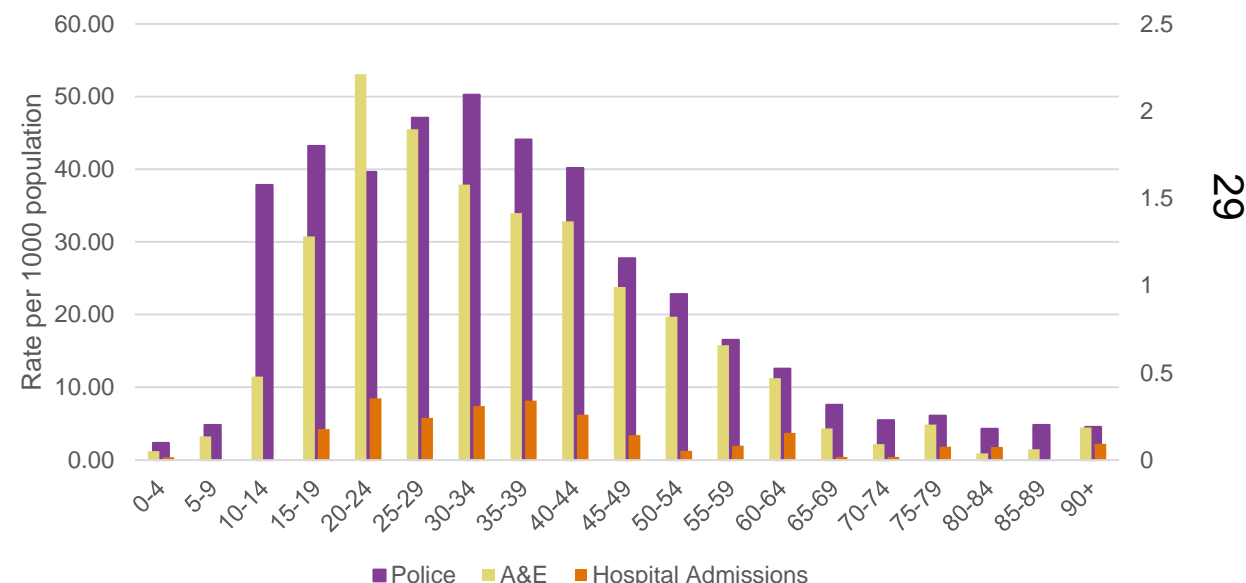
The highest volume of suspected perpetrators reside on West Leicester with the top beats being New Parks, Braunstone & Rowley Fields, Beaumont Leys and Abbey. Other areas across LLR with high numbers of suspected perpetrators are Freeman (South Leicester), Whitwick & Ibstock (North West Leicestershire), Syston (Charnwood), Earl Shilton (Hinckley & Blaby) and Humberstone (East Leicester).

## Cohort Analysis: Repeat Perpetrators of Serious Violence (all ages)

- Nearly four in ten repeat offenders live in West Leicester and two in ten live in East Leicester
- 78% were male and 79% were under 25 years old
- Over half have a flag for having a mental disorder and for being involved in drugs
- 47% were suspected of being habitual knife carriers
- 95% have been a victim of crime with nearly a third experiencing victimisation before committing their first offence
- Average age at the first offence was 13 and it was most commonly ABH

## Victims

Police data shows that 30-34 year olds are most at risk of being a victim of serious violence across LLR. When analysing health data, those aged 20-24 have the highest rates of A&E attendances and for hospital admissions, smaller rates were observed but the peak was identified with those aged 20-24, closely followed by 35-39.



Rate (per 1000 population) of victims of serious violence offences or assault-related injuries based on LLR residents by age - police recorded crime, assault-related A&E attendances and hospital admissions (April 2022 – March 2023) (Source: Leicestershire Police and Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit)

Females are most likely to be the victim of serious violence based upon police data (55.5%) but health data suggests males are at greater risk (72.7%).

Almost three quarters of victims were identified as White (76.6%), followed by smaller proportions who were categorised as Asian (16.0%), Black (5.9%) and Other (1.5%).

	All Serious Violence	Public Place Serious Violence	Domestic Abuse	Sexual Violence	Violence Involving Young People
Extent	Serious violence has <b>decreased</b> by 4% compared to the previous financial year. <b>Increases</b> in attendances to A&E and hospital admissions but figures still <b>lower than pre-pandemic rates</b> .	Serious violence has <b>increased</b> by 2% compared to the previous financial year	Domestic abuse has <b>decreased</b> by 8% compared to the previous financial year	Sexual violence has <b>decreased</b> by 5% compared to the previous financial year	Serious violence involving young people has <b>remained stable</b> compared to the previous financial year
Nature	Most commonly <b>Actual Bodily Harm (ABH)</b> offences. ‘Stalking and Harassment’, ‘Public Disorder’ and ‘Rape’ have <b>increased</b> . Majority of hospital admissions were caused by <b>assault by bodily force</b> , followed by assault by sharp object.	<b>Assault with Injury</b> makes up the greatest proportion of offences in 2022/23 with 88% categorised as <b>Actual Bodily Harm</b> offences. <b>8%</b> of public place serious violence offences <b>involved a knife or sharp object</b> .	‘ <b>Stalking and Harassment</b> ’ shows the highest rate closely followed by ‘Violence with Injury’. <b>Over a quarter</b> of offences were flagged as involving <b>alcohol</b> .	‘ <b>Sexual Assault – Female Over 13</b> ’ made up the greatest proportion of offences in 2022/23, followed by ‘Rape of Female Over 16’, Sexual Activity Child Under 16’ and ‘Exposure or Voyeurism’.	Assault occasioning <b>actual bodily harm (ABH)</b> makes up the greatest proportion of offences in 2022/23 and is followed by ‘ <b>Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety</b> ’ and ‘ <b>S2 – harassment without violence</b> ’ 8% of offences involving under 25s involved a knife or sharp object.
Timings	Higher average rate of offences over the <b>summer months</b> . Volume of offences throughout the week relatively stable, with slightly higher rates at the <b>weekend</b> . Increases seen from <b>afternoon</b> onwards (particularly Mon – Fri) and increase over the <b>weekend evenings</b> (NTE).	Higher average rate of offences over <b>Spring and Summer months</b> , peaking in <b>March and May</b> . Rates of public place violence are highest at the <b>weekends</b> (Fri – Sun), with a peak on <b>Saturday</b> Greater rate of offences between Friday evening to Saturday morning and Saturday evening to Sunday morning (NTE)	Rate of offences typically peaks in <b>January</b> . Rates are relatively stable with slight increase over the <b>weekend</b> , peaking <b>Sunday</b> . Higher rate of offences between <b>8am – 9pm</b> with the greatest density between <b>Saturday evening into Sunday morning</b>	Fluctuation over the last few years with no clear trends identified, with the exception of a <b>peak in October 2021</b> . Across the week, rate of sexual violence is relatively stable with a slight increase observed over the <b>weekend</b> , peaking on <b>Saturday</b> .	Distribution of offences throughout the week is relatively stable, with slightly higher rates observed on <b>Sunday</b> and <b>Monday</b> . Health data identifies a clear peak on <b>Sunday</b> . Greater rates between <b>Monday and Friday at 3pm</b>
Distribution	Rate of offences in the <b>City</b> is double the County. Priority areas: <b>West Leicester, East Leicester, Hinckley &amp; Blaby</b> and <b>Charnwood</b> . Almost 2/3 of offences occurred in a <b>dwelling</b> , followed by public/open place and hospitality.	Rate of offences in <b>City</b> is 2.7 times that of County Priority areas: <b>Central Leicester, East Leicester, West Leicester, Charnwood</b> and <b>Hinckley &amp; Blaby</b> . Almost 2/3 of offences occurred in a <b>public/open place</b> , followed by hospitality and shop settings.	Rate in the <b>City</b> is 1.7 times that of the County. Priority areas: <b>West Leicester, Hinckley &amp; Blaby, East Leicester</b> and <b>Charnwood</b> . Almost <b>90% occurred in a dwelling</b> , followed by public/open place and hospitality settings.	Rate in the <b>City</b> is 1.75 times that of the County. <b>Charnwood</b> observes the greatest proportion of offences, followed by <b>Central Leicester, Hinckley &amp; Blaby, West Leicester</b> and <b>East Leicester</b> . 60% of offences occurred in a <b>dwelling</b> .	Rate in the <b>City</b> is 1.3 times that of the County. <b>West Leicester</b> reported the greatest proportion, closely followed by <b>Charnwood, Hinckley &amp; Blaby, East Leicester</b> and <b>Central Leicester</b> . Almost 60% of offences occurred in a <b>dwelling</b> .
Perpetrators	Peak age: <b>40 and under</b> , peaking at <b>35 – 39</b> Gender: <b>Males</b> perpetrate the majority of serious violence and are more likely to commit high-harm offences. Majority of perpetrators <b>White</b> and come from <b>West Leicester</b> , followed by <b>East Leicester, Charnwood</b> and <b>Hinckley &amp; Blaby</b>	Peak age: <b>10 – 19 years old</b> . Gender: Over three-quarters are <b>male</b> . Majority of perpetrators are <b>White</b> Residency: <b>West Leicester</b> , followed by <b>East Leicester, Charnwood</b> and <b>Hinckley &amp; Blaby</b>	Peak ages: increase between <b>25-44, peaking at 30-34</b> . Gender: almost three-quarters are <b>male</b> . Ethnicity: majority of perpetrators are <b>White</b> . Residency: <b>West Leicester</b> , followed by <b>East Leicester, Charnwood</b> and <b>Hinckley &amp; Blaby</b> .	Peak ages: <b>10-19 years old</b> Gender: 85% are <b>male</b> Ethnicity: majority of perpetrators are <b>White</b> Residency: <b>Charnwood</b> , followed by <b>West and East Leicester</b> and <b>Hinckley &amp; Blaby</b> .	Peak ages: <b>14 and 15 years old</b> Gender: almost two-thirds <b>male</b> Ethnicity: majority of perpetrators are <b>White</b> Residency: <b>West Leicester, Charnwood, East Leicester</b> and <b>Hinckley &amp; Blaby</b>
Victims	Peak ages: <b>30 to 34-years old</b> (Police data) and <b>20-24</b> (health data). 56% of victims are <b>female</b> . Ethnicity: Minority ethnic communities more prominent in health data compared to police data Residency: <b>Hinckley &amp; Blaby</b> , followed by <b>East Leicester, West Leicester</b> and <b>Charnwood</b>	Peak ages: <b>10-14, followed by 15-19</b> Gender: almost two-thirds <b>male</b> Ethnicity: majority of victims are <b>White</b> Residency: <b>East Leicester</b> , followed by <b>West Leicester, Hinckley &amp; Blaby</b> and <b>Charnwood</b>	Peak ages: <b>30-34 years old</b> . Gender: almost three-quarters <b>female</b> . Ethnicity: majority of victims are <b>White</b> . Residency: <b>West Leicester</b> , followed by <b>Hinckley &amp; Blaby, East Leicester</b> and <b>Charnwood</b> .	Peak ages: <b>10-14 years old</b> , then <b>15-19</b> Gender: over 80% <b>female</b> Ethnicity: majority of victims are <b>White</b> Residency: <b>Hinckley &amp; Blaby</b> , followed by <b>East Leicester, West Leicester</b> and <b>Charnwood</b>	Peak ages: <b>13 – 15-year olds</b> . Gender: 56% <b>female</b> . Ethnicity: majority of victims are <b>White</b> . Residency: <b>West Leicester, Hinckley &amp; Blaby, East Leicester</b> and <b>Charnwood</b> .

# Risk & Protective Factors Associated with Serious Violence

The SNA examined the known risk and protective factors of serious violence and their prevalence across LLR. The causes of violence are multiple and complex. It is important to understand that there is no single cause of serious violence – it arises from a complex interplay between a wide range of risk factors operating within and across individual, relationship, community and societal domains. The following diagram provides an overview of some of the risk and protective factors across the different domains.

Individual and contextual risk factors occur across an individual’s life course and are subject to change. They can be cumulative, additive and sometimes multiplicative in impact. The more risk factors that accumulate in an individual or in a particular setting, the higher the likelihood that the individual will become involved in violence as a victim and/or perpetrator. Importantly, risk factors are not deterministic and should not be used diagnostically at an individual level.

**A risk factor is a characteristic that increases the likelihood of a young person becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence.**

**A protective factor is a characteristic that decreases the likelihood of a person becoming a victim or perpetrator of youth violence or buffers against the effects of risk factors.**



# Risk & Protective Factors Associated with Serious Violence

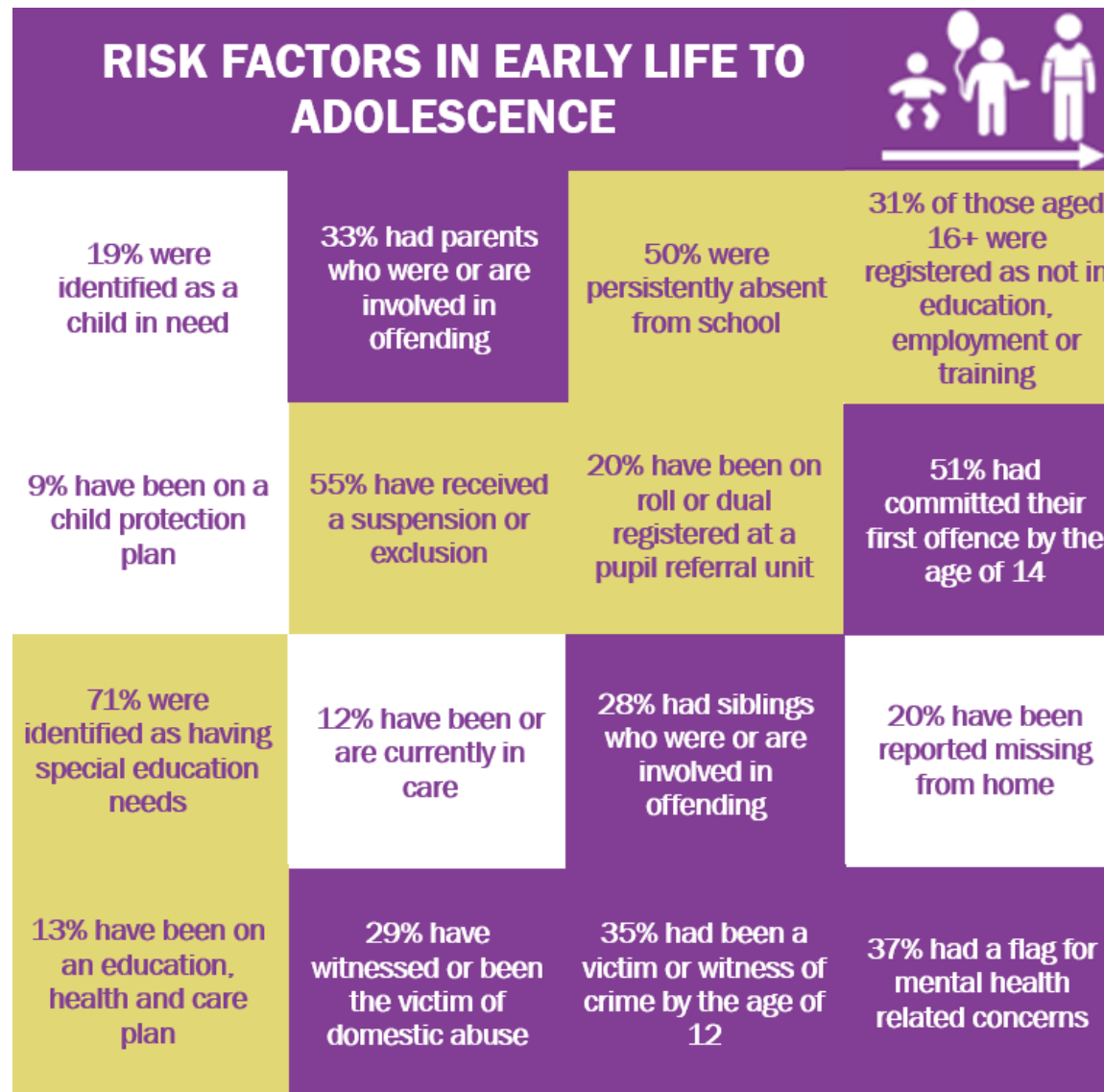


We have conducted research to examine the prevalence of some of the known risk factors amongst a cohort of children and young adults ( $n=113$ ) from LLR who recently committed high-harm serious violence including Grievous Bodily Harm, Attempt Murder or Murder.

This project involved linking data from Leicestershire Police to education and social care data from Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council – a recommendation included in last year’s SNA.

In summary, the research highlighted that this group of children and young adults experienced a wide-range of individual- and relationship-related risk factors. Based on the data available, each individual had an average of 4.8 risk factors recorded and when looking at those who had committed the highest harm offences (Murder & Attempt Murder) the average number of risk factors increased to 5.1.

The visual to the right provides highlights of crime, education- and social care-related risk factors within this group of children and young adults.



# Risk & Protective Factors Associated with Serious Violence

The following provides a summary of the prevalence of key risk factors in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland where we have data available. Rates are compared against the national average.

LEICESTER

- Amongst the most deprived geographic areas in England and the top 10% for income deprivation affecting children
- Children have poorer SEM health and below the expected level of development and attainment
- Higher rates of young people who are NEET
- Higher rates of children who are looked after
- Higher rates of first-time offenders, entrants and children in the YJS
- Higher rates of admissions for alcohol-related conditions and dependent drinkers
- Higher rates of children on a child protection plan
- Higher number of children who are habitual knife carriers
- Higher proportion of adults in treatment at specialist drug misuse services
- Higher rates of economic inactivity and unemployment

LEICESTER-SHIRE

- Lower rates of children who have reached a good level of development at age 2
- Higher rates of children on an education, health and care plan
- Fewer people who use services feel safe
- Higher rates of anti-social behaviour involving young people
- Higher number of County Lines

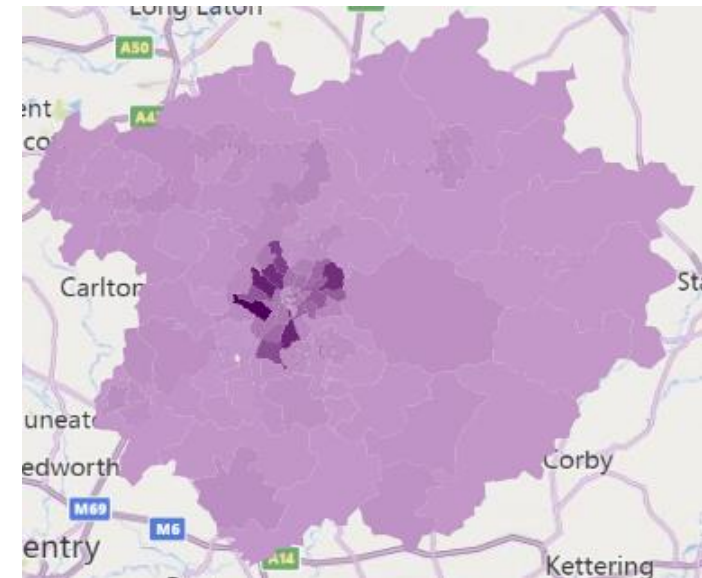
RUTLAND

- Higher rate of 10 to 24-year olds being admitted to hospital as a result of self-harm compared to Leicester and Leicestershire
- Fewer people who use services feel safe

Based upon the data which has been shared with the VRN to date, West Leicester, East Leicester, Charnwood and Hinckley & Blaby are the areas in LLR which have the higher concentration of risk factors. These are also the areas which have the highest rates of serious violence.

More specifically, the following areas are highlighted from the analysis of individual, relationship and community risk factors:

- Braunstone
- Humberstone
- New Parks
- Spinney Hill
- Beaumont Leys
- Loughborough and the surrounding areas
- Hinckley



Choropleth map by postcode sector of social care and education risk factors experienced by young people in LLR (Source: Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council)

# Preventing Serious Violence

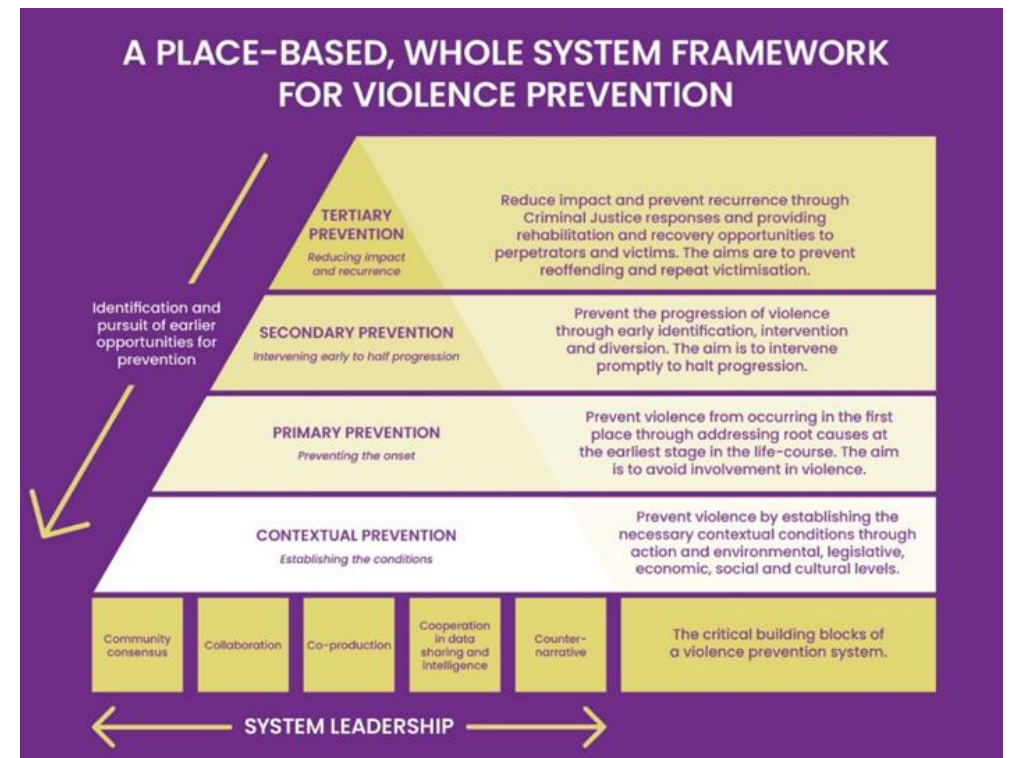
Central to a public health approach is the core belief that violence is preventable; that it is possible to prevent and reduce modifiable risk factors and to strengthen protective factors. The SNA synthesised the growing body of evidence, drawn from research, on the approaches and interventions which have demonstrated effectiveness in preventing and reducing serious violence.

Drawing on resources provided from Public Health England (2019), the VRN has developed a framework to support the design and delivery of comprehensive, evidence-based prevention programmes which tackle the complex and multi-layered nature of risk and protective factors. The 5 C's framework represents the critical building blocks of a violence prevention system and includes:

<b>Community consensus</b>	At the core of an effective approach to preventing violence, local responses should be 'with and for communities' to build trust and confidence and ensure that they are relevant and responsive.
<b>Collaboration</b>	Tackling serious violence requires system thinking and collaboration between a wide-range of groups, organisations and sectors often beyond organisational boundaries.
<b>Co-production</b>	Strategies and interventions should be co-produced with young people, their families and communities.
<b>Co-operation in data</b>	A key enabler to preventing violence is the commitment of organisations to identify, share and analyse all relevant data.
<b>Counter-narrative</b>	Concrete and credible alternatives to involvement in violence are critical as is promoting hope rather than deficit-based approaches which can often perpetuate the problems we're seeking to address.

For prevention activity to be effective in the long-term, it should adopt a life-course approach which considers the critical stages, transitions and settings in which there are opportunities to reduce and manage risk factors and strengthen protective factors.

The following framework embodies the life-course approach and is used by the VRN to understand, plan and take action to prevent and reduce serious violence:



# Preventing Serious Violence



## Interventions and Approaches

Implementing high quality, evidenced-based interventions is key to preventing and reducing serious violence. The SNA, whilst acknowledging the gaps in the evidence-base, highlighted the strategies and interventions which are most likely to be effective.

The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (2016) has identified six strategies for preventing violence involving young people which are underpinned by the best available evidence. They are presented alongside the key interventions and approaches which fall within these strategies.

1. **Promote family environments that support health development** – this includes parenting programmes, family nurse partnerships and therapeutic approaches to trauma
2. **Provide quality education in early life** – this includes bullying prevention, school-based programmes and classroom management
3. **Strengthen young people’s skills** – this includes universal school programmes (e.g. social skills training) and behavioural / skills-building interventions
4. **Connect young people to trusted adults and activities** – this includes mentoring programmes, after-school programmes and recreational activities
5. **Create protective community environments** – this includes limiting alcohol and weapon access, data sharing, hotspot and problem-solving policing, environmental design and community norm change
6. **Intervene to lessen harms and prevent future risk** – this includes therapeutic and cognitive-behavioural approaches for perpetrators, hospital-based interventions and substance misuse programmes

The Youth Endowment Fund’s (YEF) Toolkit summarises the best available research evidence about different approaches to preventing young people from becoming involved in serious violence.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON VIOLENCE	APPROACHES	EVIDENCE QUALITY	
		Low	High
High	Focused deterrence	High	High
	Social skills training	High	High
	Cognitive behaviour therapy	High	High
	Sport programmes	High	High
	A&E navigators	High	High
	Trauma-specific therapies	High	High
Moderate	Pre-court diversion	High	High
	Relationship violence prevention lessons and activities	High	High
	Mentoring	High	High
	Restorative justice	High	High
	Hot spots policing	High	High
	Bystander interventions to prevent sexual assault	High	High
	Multi-systemic therapy	High	High
Low	After-school programmes	High	High
	Interventions to prevent school exclusions	High	High
	Anti-bullying programmes	High	High
	Adventure and wilderness therapy	High	High
	Parenting programmes	High	High
Unclear	Police in schools	High	High
	Knife surrender schemes	High	High
	Media campaigns	High	High
	Trauma-informed training and service redesign	High	High
Harmful	Boot camps	High	High
	Prison awareness programmes	High	High

# Recommendations



The SNA made 14 recommendations for the core membership to consider when refreshing the VRN's Response Strategy. These build on previous SNA recommendations and do not represent a change in focus or direction but rather a strengthening of work underway. However, as our understanding of the data improves and the evidence-base evolves, it is important to ensure that there is sufficient focus on the populations most at risk and that all interventions are developed and delivered in a way which is consistent with the evidence base.

## Strategic-level recommendations

The strategic recommendations are those which will require cross-sector collaboration and chief officer/senior manager support.

1. Continue to discharge the VRN's core function in ensuring it operates across the system and connects and collaborates with other relevant strategic and operational developments.
2. Continue to improve both access to and quality of multi-agency data particularly in relation to known risk and protective factors.
3. Work with the Strategic Partnership Board to increase future capability in data sharing through improving connectivity between systems.
4. Increase the use of VRN data and evidence products in strategic planning and operations within partner organisations and Community Safety Partnerships.
5. Continue to prioritise the City (with a particular focus on the Central, East and West areas), Charnwood and Hinckley & Blaby, and the under 25 age group, and assault-related, sexual and stalking and harassment offences.
6. Develop and implement a multi-agency, community-focused problem-solving approach to tackle persistence issues with violence after-school and in the night-time economy.

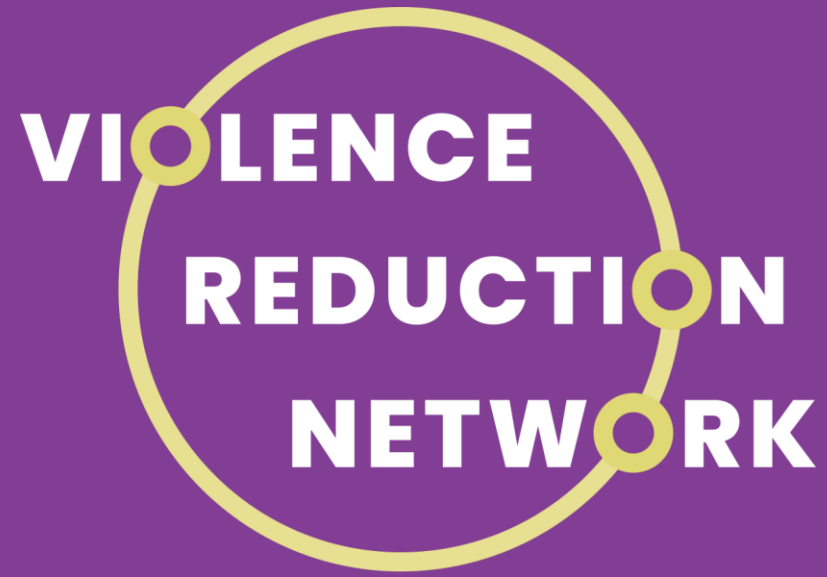
7. Strengthen strategic and operational work to tackle the higher prevalence of risk factors identified in the cohort analysis (e.g. mental health, substance misuse and early involvement in offending).
8. Ensure that the importance of gender and the associated cultural norms are understood and factored into prevention activity across the partnership.
9. Continue to embed evaluation and learning across the system.

## Intervention-level recommendations

The intervention-level recommendations build on the evidence-informed approach that the VRN is already taking in relation to intervention design and delivery.

10. Continue to design and test primary and early intervention approaches.
11. Continue to invest in 'teachable moment' interventions and progress to the evaluation phase.
12. Build on evaluation findings to strengthen local out of court/diversionary interventions across the partnership.
13. Provide specialist education, training and employment support and sport/recreation opportunities.
14. Implement and evaluate a focused deterrence intervention.





LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE  
& RUTLAND

If you would like to find out more about the Violence Reduction Network, you can contact us at:

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You can also find details of our work at:

[www.violencereductionnetwork.co.uk](http://www.violencereductionnetwork.co.uk)

You can keep up-to-date with VRN developments at:

[@VR\\_Network](https://twitter.com/VR_Network)

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